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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2004

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Savings Deposit Insurance Fund Seizes Uzan Assets-Hurriyet
Turkey Secures Support of 11 EU countries - Sabah
Turkish Land Forces Commander Postpones Visit to Cyprus -
Milliyet
FBI Officials in Ankara to Discuss Extradition of Uzans -
Hurriyet
PM Erdogan Rejects 'Privileged Partnership' with EU -
Hurriyet
Positive Cyprus Developments Boost Markets - Sabah

OPINION MAKERS

Greek Cypriots Criticize Papadopoulos - Radikal
Denktas: 'too Early' for Celebrations in Cyprus - Cumhuriyet
Harsh Reaction to 'censorship' at 'Star' - Cumhuriyet
Foreign Ministry Sends Special Team to Cyprus-Radikal
Erdogan Annoyed with CDU 'Privileged Partnership' Offer -
Yeni Safak

BRIEFING

Seizure of Uzans' Assets: All papers and TV channels report that the Savings Deposit Insurance Fund (TMSF) acted to seize Uzan family assets, including more than 200 companies owned by the Uzans or their partners. The seizures include "Star TV" and "Star" newspaper, the key outlets in the Uzan media empire. The TMSF appointed new boards of directors to all companies seized in the operation. In a written statement, the TMSF claimed that the Uzans were siphoning their capital and assets outside the country in order to escape the TL 7.5 quadrillion they owe the state from their fraud at Imar Bank. Cem Uzan was asked to leave his villa within a week because it was registered as a 'Media Group Guest House.' Under the takeover procedures, all Uzan companies will be run by trustees. Today's "Hurriyet" reports that the US has sent two FBI officials to Ankara to discuss the extradition of Kemal, Yavuz and Hakan Uzan. "Milliyet" draws attention to PM Erdogan's remarks that the action taken against the Uzan family will be applied to all other failed bank owners as well. Meanwhile, Turkish Press Council chairman Oktay Eksi criticized the action against Uzan-owned "Star TV" and "Star" newspaper. Eksi complained that the seizure violated the freedom of the press.

Cyprus: Weekend papers report that the Turkish and Greek Cypriots have agreed to begin discussions on February 19 within the framework of the Annan plan. The two sides will seek to agree on a reunification plan by March 22. Monday's "Radikal" claims that, during the discussions in New York, the Greek side tried to provoke Denktas to leave the table. However, with strong encouragement from Turkey side, Denktas showed extraordinary patience in his performance in New York. Monday's "Yeni Safak" reports that Denktas has outlined three conditions for the success of the negotiations. First, the two sides must accept the 'status' of the other. Second, the guarantor status of Turkey must continue. Finally, the presence of two sovereign states on the island must be accepted. Weekend papers report that PM Erdogan and FM Gul praised Denktas for his successful work in New York.

EU Accession: All papers report that PM Erdogan harshly rejected a proposal by visiting chairman of the German Christian Democratic Union Angela Merkel for a 'privileged partnership' with the EU instead of full EU membership. Erdogan reportedly termed the offer 'unacceptable,' and argued that Turkey had shown greater progress in meeting EU

criteria than any of the 10 candidate countries that will become new EU members in May.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Cyprus

"Time to support Denktas"
Cengiz Candar observed in the mass appeal "DB-Tercuman" (2/17): "The negotiation mechanism that was set up in New York has imposed a solution on Cyprus. . . If the two Cyprus parties cannot agree on a solution, UNSG Annan will invite Turkey and Greece, together with the Cypriots, to New York to attend a 'Dayton' or 'Camp David'-style negotiation process. . . If a result is still not attained, then the UNSG will take the initiative and fill in the blanks in the draft. The resulting plan will then be submitted to simultaneous referenda on the island. Such provisions show that a solution to the Cyprus problem is now inevitable. . . The Cyprus problem is essentially a problem between Turkey and Greece. It is a problem of balance in the Eastern Mediterranean. . . The emergence of the Cyprus issue and of Greece's membership in the EU has disrupted that balance. A solution to the Cyprus problem and an opening of Turkey's EU horizons might reestablish the balance. . . Since a solution is inevitable on Cyprus, we must strive to attain the best possible outcome for Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots within the parameters set out by the UN. It is time to support Denktas toward that goal."

"984 hours to go"
Mehmet Ali Birand commented in the mass appeal "Posta" (2/17): "We have now 984 hours to see all negotiations concluded on Cyprus. . . We expect tough negotiations on the political issues. Believing they have already conceded a great deal, the Cypriot sides are preparing to put up their last fight. No matter how much they yell about the process, somebody will come in to fill in the blanks if no compromise is reached. . . The only way to stop the solution process in Cyprus is by voting against the referenda. The Greek Cypriots may vote against a settlement, but I don't think the Turkish Cypriots, poised to opt between getting rich or remaining poor, will oppose a solution."

EDELMAN